

one side of said sole to the other, a second portion extending through said channel and slideable within said channel, and a third portion extending in a rearward direction transversely across the wearer's instep from said other side to said one side of said sole, the first and third portions of said strap forming an X configuration over the wearer's instep, and the second portion being between the first and third portions of said strap; and


d) an adjustable fastener attached to said strap for adjusting said strap to pull the midsole portion of said sole snugly to the wearer's foot.


27. An article of footwear as in claim 26, wherein said instep strap has two ends, one end connected to the lateral side of the heel portion of said sole and the other end connected to the medial side of the heel portion of said sole.

28. An article of footwear as in claim 26, wherein said channel is angled downwardly from rear to front in a longitudinal direction.

29. An article of footwear as in claim 28, wherein the angle of downward inclination is between 2-15 degrees measured from a horizontal plane.

30. An article of footwear as in claim 26, wherein said instep strap does not extend around the wearer's heel or forefoot.

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31. An article of footwear as in claim 26, further comprising a shank, said shank at least partly underling said sole, said shank being stiffer than said sole, said channel extending through said shank.
32. An article of footwear as in claim 26, said sole having a longitudinal axis and said channel being substantially perpendicular to said longitudinal axis.
33. An article of footwear as in claim 26, wherein said sole has a forefoot, further comprising a toe strap attached to the forefoot portion of said sole, and a lateral strap extending between and connected to said toe strap and said instep strap.
34. An article of footwear as in claim 26, further comprising lateral and medial heel posts attached respectively to the lateral and medial sides of the heel portion of said sole, said instep strap having two ends attached respectively to said heel posts; and a heel strap extending between and attached to said heel posts
35. An article of footwear as in claim 34, wherein said sole has a forefoot, further comprising a toe strap attached to the forefoot portion of said sole, and a lateral strap extending between and connected to said toe strap and said lateral heel post.
36. An article of footwear, comprising:
- a) a sole, the sole having a midfoot portion and a heel portion;

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- b) a channel extending transversely across the midfoot portion of said sole and at least partly under said sole, said channel angled downwardly from rear to front in a longitudinal direction;
 - c) a strap connected to said heel portion of said sole, said strap having a first portion extending in a forward direction transversely across a wearer's instep from one side of said sole to the other, a second portion extending through said channel, and a third portion extending in a rearward direction transversely across the wearer's instep from said other side to said one side of said sole, said first and third portions forming an X configuration over the wearer's instep; and
 - d) a fastener attached to said strap adapted to pull said midsole portion of said sole snugly to the wearer's foot.

37. An article of footwear as in claim 36, wherein the angle of downward inclination is between 2-15 degrees measured from a horizontal plane.

38. An article of footwear as in claim 36, further comprising a shank attached to said sole, said shank at least partly underling the midfoot portion of said sole, said channel extending through said shank.

39. An article of footwear as in claim 36 wherein said sole has a longitudinal axis and said channel is substantially perpendicular to said axis.

40. An article of footwear as in claim 36, further comprising lateral and medial heel posts attached respectively to the lateral and medial sides of the heel portion of said sole, said instep strap having two ends attached respectively to said heel posts; and a heel strap extending between and attached to said heel posts.

41. An article of footwear, comprising:

- a) a sole, the sole having a midfoot portion and a heel portion;
- b) a shank under the midfoot portion of said sole, said shank having a stiffness greater than said sole, said shank having a channel extending transversely under said midfoot portion of said sole;
- c) an instep strap connected to the heel portion of said sole, said strap having a first portion extending in a forward direction transversely across a wearer's instep from one side of said sole to the other, a second portion extending through said shank channel and being slideable within said channel, and a third portion extending in a rearward direction transversely across the wearer's instep from said other side to said one side of said sole, said first and third portions forming an X configuration over the wearer's instep.

42. An article of footwear as in claim 41 further comprising an adjustable fastener attached to said instep strap for adjusting said strap to pull said midsole portion of said sole snugly to the wearer's foot.

43. An article of footwear as in claim 41, wherein said channel is angled downwardly in the longitudinal direction from back to front at an angle of between 2-15 degrees measured from a horizontal plane.

44. An article of footwear as in claim 41, wherein said instep strap is connected to the sole at the lateral and medial sides of the heel portion of said sole, and at the lateral and medial sides of the midfoot portion of said sole, and wherein said instep strap does not extend around the wearer's heel or forefoot.

45. An article of footwear as in claim 41 wherein said sole has a longitudinal axis and said channel is substantially perpendicular to said axis.

46. An article of footwear, comprising:

- a) a sole, said sole having forefoot, midfoot and heel portions;
- b) a channel extending across the midfoot portion of said sole, said channel being at least partly under said sole;
- c) an instep strap attached at its respective ends to the lateral and medial sides of said heel portion of said sole, said strap having a first portion extending in a forward direction transversely across a wearer's instep from one side of said sole to the other, a second portion extending through said channel, and a third portion extending in a rearward direction transversely across the wearer's instep from said other side to said one side of said sole, said first and third portions forming an X configuration over the wearer's instep, thereby providing connection points

between said instep strap and said sole at the lateral and medial sides of the heel portion of said sole and the lateral and medial sides of the midfoot portion of said sole; and

d) a fastener attached to said instep strap to pull said midsole to the wearer's foot.

47. An article of footwear as in claim 46 further comprising a shank attached to the midfoot portion of said sole, below at least a portion of said sole, said shank comprised of a stiff material, said channel extending transversely through said shank.

48. An article of footwear as in claim 46 wherein said instep strap does not extend across the forefoot portion or the heel portion of said sole.

49. An article of footwear as in claim 48, further comprising an adjustable forefoot strap attached to the lateral and medial sides of the forefoot portion of said sole.

50. An article of footwear, comprising:

- a) a sole, said sole having forefoot, midfoot and heel portions;
- b) a shank at least partly under the midfoot portion of said sole, said shank having a transverse channel;
- c) an instep strap attached at its respective ends to the lateral and medial sides of said heel portion of said sole, said strap having a first portion extending in a forward direction transversely across a wearer's instep from one side of said sole to the

other, a second portion extending through said channel and being slideable within said channel, and a third portion extending in a rearward direction transversely across the wearer's instep from said other side to said one side of said sole, said first and third portions forming an X configuration over the wearer's instep, thereby said instep strap is anchored to said sole at the lateral and medial midfoot portion and the lateral and medial heel portions of said sole;

- d) a forefoot strap attached to the lateral and medial sides of said sole and extending across the wearer's forefoot; and
- e) a lateral strap extending between and connected to said instep strap and said forefoot strap.

51. A footwear product to be worn by a user on the user's foot, comprising:

a sole;

a transverse passageway extending through said sole; and

a strap system configured to secure the footwear product to the user's foot including:

a heel portion,

an X-strap assembly coupled to said heel portion, wherein said X-strap assembly includes a continuous strap having a first portion extending transversely across the user's instep from a first side of the footwear to a second side, a second portion extending through said transverse passageway, and a third portion extending transversely across the user's instep from said second side to said first side of said